



Equitable access to the arts for every child

Every child should have access to the advantages that arts and culture bring. A creative, arts-rich education is good for pupil well-being, social mobility, and economic growth.

The UK's children do not have equal access to arts and culture. We need to work together – policy makers, schools, teachers, artists and cultural organisations – to ensure that every child and young person is enabled to fulfil their potential. Otherwise the arts, and the benefits they offer, will continue to be the preserve of those who can afford them.

A broad and balanced education has to include the arts. The Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA) is calling for a **high-quality, universal cultural entitlement for all**, that can be locally interpreted and delivered in partnership. This paper sets out how it can be achieved through:

- **A National Plan** *for cultural learning*

We acknowledge that excellent work is happening across the country, but we need to work together to analyse our projects and programmes, and decide together what is of quality, what should be scaled, and what new risks should be taken. A National Plan will help us to do this.

- **An Arts Premium** *giving children universal access to quality arts provision*

Ring-fenced money for schools will make a real difference. We need a national investment programme for arts in schools. An equivalent amount to that currently invested in sport would enable us to develop a model that ensures quality, and makes a real difference to the ability of schools to grow capacity, appetite and expertise.

- **Continuing Professional Development & Learning blueprint** *for teachers and cultural learning leaders*

We want to support every school to revive, sustain and develop its arts subject specialism expertise, so that they can deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. The arts and cultural sector should also be supported to professionalise its offer to schools, and truly become a trusted part of the children's workforce.

**PLAN + PREMIUM + PROFESSIONALS =
equitable access to the arts for every child**

Equitable access to the arts for every child

The Cultural Learning Alliance is calling for equitable access to the arts for every child and believes it can be achieved through three key steps.

1. A NATIONAL PLAN FOR CULTURAL LEARNING

The CLA is calling for a national vision and strategy to act as a framework for all partners, helping them to deliver an evidence-informed, high-quality arts offer for all children.

A large number of different cultural learning projects, initiatives, organisations and systems exist within the UK and need to be enabled to work better together: a **national plan** for cultural learning can provide a **long-term strategy** reaching beyond three-year funding cycles, and enabling opportunities and partnerships to be built, honed, interrogated and sustained.

Over the past two decades there have been a large number of policy interventions operating in this space: from Find Your Talent, to Cultural Passports, to Local Cultural Education Partnerships. The National Plan for Music Education and its associated investment into Music Hubs has demonstrated the impact a national vision can have on improving outcomes for young people. The CLA believes we need a national plan for the arts and cultural learning overall: we have the opportunity to build on this body of learning to ensure that all children and young people can fulfil their potential.

A National Plan for Cultural Learning should include:

- **An evidence-informed vision** for arts and cultural learning for children and young people aged 0-19, which clearly articulates the principles of quality and creative cultural learning
- **An outline of the opportunities** that every young person should have access to, regardless of background or geography (e.g. from opportunities to participate and make, to developing skills for work)
- **The key skills and knowledge that need to exist in schools and in arts and cultural organisations** to ensure that the needs of young people are met
- **Recommendations for key investments** that need to be made to achieve the vision
- **Recommendations for the areas of research** that need to be updated/developed to support the development of the Plan
- **A requirement for the ongoing professional learning and development of artists and professionals working in the education sector**, including those within arts organisations
- **Strong and structured links with current and emerging education policy from the outset**, which ensure that cultural learning is embedded within the ‘intent, implementation and impact’ structure of the new Ofsted Framework, within the National Curriculum, and within plans to train, develop and retain teachers
- **An inbuilt evaluation** that allows for learning to be widely shared – locally, nationally and internationally

The Plan should also:

- **Provide clear examples** of the kinds of agencies and partnerships that can be formed or utilised at a local level to ensure that a joined-up local, regional/area-wide strategy is in place
- Establish a clear, light-touch framework that **helps all schools, cultural organisations and local partners understand their roles and responsibilities** in delivering a cultural learning offer to every child
- **Enable schools to broaden and strengthen their curricula** and embed the arts within their offer, without adding to teacher workload
- **Be structured for local interpretation** by the most appropriate partners

2. ARTS PREMIUM

The CLA calls for specific ring-fenced funding for arts education from government to every primary school.

Giving children universal access to high-quality, creative arts provision at primary level will enable them to progress, while helping them to develop the habits and passions that will build their cultural capital and underpin their well-being. School leaders should be trusted and supported to build the partnerships and provision that work for them, and should be given clear guidance on how to invest in quality and in sustainable capacity. We want to restore the pipeline to arts qualifications at Key Stage 3 and beyond, as well as to careers.

Ring-fenced money for schools will make a real difference. We need a national investment programme for arts in schools, but we recommend a rigorous period of testing. We would like to take an equivalent amount to that currently invested in sport, and develop a model that truly ensures quality and make a real difference to the ability of schools to grow their capacity, appetite and expertise and to make the current arts subject infra-structure more creative. For maximum effect, the Premium should include Early Years settings, and Ofsted should be tasked with holding schools to account on their delivery and spending.

The Arts Premium should be funded at the same level as sport: schools with 16 or fewer eligible pupils receive £1,000 per pupil; schools with 17 or more eligible pupils receive £16,000 and an additional payment of £10 per pupil. The total PE and Sport Premium cost is £320m per year. The CLA recognises there are valuable lessons we can learn from the implementation of the Sports Premium to ensure that any existing pitfalls are overcome.

3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The CLA is calling for a Continuing Professional Development & Learning (CPDL) blueprint for teachers and cultural learning leaders.

We want to support every school to revive and develop its arts subject specialism expertise so that they can deliver a truly broad and balanced curriculum. We need to ensure that generalist primary teachers are confident and proficient in teaching the arts, and that individual arts subjects are taught by passionate specialists. Alongside this, it is important

that the arts and cultural sector maintains and grows its capacity and expertise to work effectively with schools and to deliver quality outcomes.

Key education and arts leaders and experts would work together to develop the Continuing Professional Development & Learning (CPDL) blueprint for teachers and cultural learning leaders. It would drive quality teaching practice in arts subjects at all levels of the profession in order to ensure that a broad and balanced curriculum can be delivered in every school. The blueprint would draw on research and evidence to develop the knowledge base around in-depth, arts subject-specific, disciplinary knowledge. It would map how sustained leadership programmes and support for professional learning could be delivered to ensure strong and embedded arts curriculum planning. It could be deployed at regional and local level by education and arts leaders. The blueprint would work in tandem with a national plan.

In parallel it is essential that the arts and cultural sector maintains and grows its capacity and expertise to work effectively with schools and to deliver quality outcomes. The CLA is calling for:

- **More investment, particularly in leadership**, within the cultural sector's learning workforce. Leaders with strong expertise at all levels will be essential to the successful implementation of the national plan
- The development of an **Early Career Framework equivalent for artists working in education**. This could build on established schemes where they exist and be part of the blueprint.
- **Training for the arts and cultural workforce to understand the role their work can play in teacher CPDL**

Equality of access to arts and culture is the right of every child and should be unaffected by income, ethnicity, gender, disability or location. This is a social justice issue: research shows that children with an arts deficit are disadvantaged educationally and economically while their more fortunate peers are more resilient, healthier, do better in school, are more likely to vote, to go to university, to get a job and to keep it. Participation in the arts fuels social mobility.

Children who feel ownership of the arts also feel more confident in their ability to create, challenge and explore; they learn to participate not just in arts activities but within society. Access to the arts is access to our national life.

Our key publication, *ImagineNation: the value of cultural learning*, our [published evidence base](#) and our [suite of Briefing Papers](#) set out the case, definitions and arguments for this agenda.

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